

PROFITABILITY OF TURKEY PRODUCTION IN AHOADA EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the profitability of turkey production in Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. A total of one hundred turkey farmers were selected from ten autonomous communities that make up Ahoada East Local Government Area. This particular area was chosen for the study because about 70% of the entire population is involved in turkey and other poultry productions. Structured questionnaires were employed to elicit information from the respondents. Statistical analysis was accomplished by means of frequency, distribution, percentages, Likert rating scale and budget analysis. The study revealed the major sources of fund for turkey production among the keepers as personal savings, financial assistance from family members and loans from micro-finance banks with low interest rate of about 10%. It was also revealed that the keepers embarked on the project because of its profitability ($X_s=4.2$), minimal initial capital requirement ($X_s=3.6$) and because it can be practiced on part time basis ($X_s=3.5$). Analysis also indicated that an average turkey keeper with farm size of 300 turkeys makes a profit of about three hundred thousand naira (₦350,000.00) a year. However, turkey production has some constraints like high cost and unavailability of poults ($X_s=4.10$). High cost of quality feed ($X_s=3.21$), disease mortality ($X_s=3.10$). The turkey productions have offered reasonable income and employment opportunities to the keepers in the study area.

KEYWORD: Profitability, turkey production, Ahoada East L.G.A, Rivers State Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Low animal protein intake has remained a major human nutritional problem in Nigeria, especially for the low income and non-wage earners (Amaefule *et al.*, 2009). Okorie (2000) had identified exorbitant cost of production of ruminants and called for the encouragement of the production of monogastrics which cost less in terms of housing and other management practices. It also takes shorter time to mature to market weights. Ironkwe *et al.*; (2007) also advocates that monogastrics are easier to manage, have relatively high turnover and quick returns to capital invested. According to Ajala and Adeshinwa (2006), the production of turkey is not popular in Nigeria until recently. Turkey is the largest of the poultry species, reaching 10-15kg live-weight. But in Nigeria, large strains or hybrids of 8 -12 kg live-weight and of white plumage are reared. Turkey can be reared intensively, semi-intensively or extensively.

But the scope of this study covers those under intensive system of management which makes for better profit earning. According to Egbunike *et al.*; (2000), turkey production is one of the good sources of animal protein in Nigeria. It is considered like chicken as a suitable alternative for small or large scale animal protein production because of its short production cycle. The turkey eggs require only twenty-eight day incubation period to hatch. But the reason for apparent inertia in turkey production appears to be lack of appreciation of its potential in contributing to the protein need or perhaps the lack of understanding of its management techniques and production (Oluyemi *et al.*, 2007).

Peter *et al.*, (1997) stated that local turkeys are natural foragers and can be kept as scavengers. They can also be kept on small financial capability. The study was aimed at investigating the profitability of turkey production among the keepers in Ahoada-East local government area of Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The study covered the ten autonomous communities that make up Ahoada East Local Government Area of Rivers State. The major occupation of the people is farming in crop and livestock, trading and palm wine-tapping. Primary data for the study were generated through the use of structured questionnaire distributed to 100 turkey keepers in the study area. This sample size was randomly drawn from the ten autonomous communities that make up the study area. Ten respondents were randomly taken from each of ten communities.

Table 1: Sources of fund to turkey keepers

Sources	Percentages
1. Personal savings and grants from relatives	70.0
2. Loans from government agencies	0
3. Loans from commercial/community banks	10.0
4. Co-operative societies	20.0

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to the factors that motivated and sustained their interest in turkey production

Factors	Xs (means score)
1. Profitability of the business	4.20
2. Required minimal initial capital	3.75
3. Easy management	1.80
4. Source of employment	3.50
5. Source of meat and egg for the family	2.40
6. Can be practiced on a small scale	2.25

Source: Field Survey, 2009

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data on objective. The objective was analyzed with budget analysis technique while objective of profitability and reason for keeping turkey were analyzed with 5-point Likert scale.

Any item in the mean score (X_s) of 3.0 or above is accepted as a positive factor while items with mean score below 3.0 are rejected. Ninety two (92) questionnaires were accurately filled and returned while 8 of them were either wrongly filled or not returned. Analysis was therefore based on the 92 returned copies of the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result of analysis showed that the major source of fund to turkey farmers were personal saving and financial assistance from relatives (71.2 %) as shown in table 1. It was indicated that none of the respondents obtained any form of fund from government agencies. However, 15.4% of the respondents funded their turkey business through cooperative societies while 13.4% obtained loans from commercial and community banks for their turkey projects. The results of the analysis showed that cooperative societies funding ranked next to personal savings and grants from relatives in capital generation for turkey business. This was because the conditions attached were less stringent when compared to getting loans from other financial sources. There could be varying reasons while individuals embarked on turkey business, (table 2). It was revealed that the highest motivating factor to turkey production by turkey farmers is the profitability of the business ($X_s = 4.2$). The result also indicated that other significant reasons why people embark on turkey farming included that the business required minimal initial capital ($X_s = 3.75$) and that it can be practiced on a small scale ($X_s = 3.5$): This finding validated claims by Ironkwe *et al*; (2009) that turkey production require initial minimal capital when compared to other livestock practices.

Results from data analysis indicated that an average turkey farmer in the study area invested about one hundred and fifty thousand naira (₦150, 000) only in the enterprise in 2009 (Table 3). These included costs of the procurement of some items as poults, feed, labour, drugs and vaccines and other veterinary services. The result also showed that a total revenue of three hundred and fifty naira (₦350,000.00) was earned from the enterprise during the period: these figures implied that an average turkey producer in the study area earned a net income of two hundred thousand naira

(₦200,000.00) during the period of production. In order words, ten naira thirty- three kobo invested in turkey production earned twenty naira, thirty kobo.

Table 3: Enterprises budget for average turkey farmer using intensive system as at 2009.

Revenue	Amount (₦)	Expenditure	Amount (₦)
Income from egg production	120,00	Variable cost (VC)	
Income from meat production	180,00	Poults	45,000
Miscellaneous income from enterprises	50,000	Feed	70,000
Total Revenue (TR)	350,000	Labour	5,000
		Veterinary services	10,000
		Miscellaneous	2,000
		Fixed Cost	
		Depreciation on housing	10,000
		Depreciation on equipment	8,000
		Total production cost (TPC)	150,000
		Net income (NI)	200,000

Table 4: Constraints to turkey enterprise

No	Constraints	Xs (Mean score)
1	Lack of awareness for the Importance of turkey meat	1.98
2	Technical know- how	1.96
3	Lack of infrastructure	1.94
4	Lack of land- space for expansion	3.22
5	Lack of loans	4.08
6	High Cost of feed	4.10
7	High Cost of poults	3.22
8	Disease incidence	3.21
9	Lack of drugs and vaccine	3.10
10	High interest rates	2.48
11	Low quality feed	1.97
12	Lack of record keeping	1.97
13	High cost of labour	1.70
14	Lack of market for output	2.15

Source: Field Survey 2008

This was a good profit margin and indicated that turkey enterprise is a profitable business in the study area. About fourteen possible constraints to turkey keeping were itemized for rating by the respondents (Table 4). Five items were rated above the decision score of 3.0 indicating that they were the significant constraints to turkey business among the keepers.

These major constraints included high cost of feed, ($X_s = 4.10$), difficulty in securing loans for possible expansion ($X_s = 4.08$), high cost of poults ($X_s = 3.22$), disease incidence ($X_s = 3.21$) and lack of drugs and vaccines ($X_s = 3.10$). It is remarkable that such sensitive factors as lack of awareness that turkey meat and egg are important sources of animal protein to man, lack of technical know-how, high interest rates, shortage of land for turkey production, lack of infrastructure, inaccessibility to veterinary doctors and services, lack of extension officers and low hatchability constituted little or on problem of turkey keeping in the study area. It is obvious that constraints to turkey production are more of input mobilization than management factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study revealed that most turkey producers in the study area financed their turkey business through personal savings and grants from relatives. This implied that turkey enterprise could start without initial resort to credit facilities from financial institutions. It was also revealed that most keepers embarked on the production because of its profitability.

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